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ABSTRACT

The Scottish Executive Council is working closely with education authorities, schools, and parents to ensure that all Scotland's children have the opportunities and encouragement to attain high standards in literacy and numeracy. The framework for education that has been put in place through the "Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000" allows education authorities and schools to develop innovative and flexible approaches to education while ensuring that high standards are maintained nationally. The national statements on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy provide for the first time a complete overview of the national guidance, resources, and initiatives available across pre-school, primary, and secondary education. The main issues to be addressed are: the raising of levels of attainment amongst students experiencing poverty and injustice; the promotion of links between preschool, primary, and secondary schools; the improvement of standards in S1/S2 in particular; the disparity in attainment in literacy between boys and girls; and the encouragement of education authorities to share good practice. This commentary document provides an overview of the contents of the national statements and is intended for Directors of Education, primary (elementary) and secondary teachers, members of school boards and other interested parties. (NKA)

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ED 473 499

Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in Schools

Commentary

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FOREWORD

Literacy and numeracy are the foundation stones of education. Without acquiring a sound basis of knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, children will not be able to benefit fully from school education and will face serious difficulties in reaching their full potential. This is why the very first of our national priorities for education is to **"raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results"**.

The Scottish Executive is working closely with education authorities, schools and parents to ensure that all Scotland's children have the opportunities and encouragement to attain high standards in literacy and numeracy. In line with our strong commitment to social justice, we are particularly concerned to assist pupils from socially disadvantaged areas reach their full educational potential by acquiring good-quality skills in literacy and numeracy.

The framework for education that has been put in place through the "Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000" allows education authorities and schools to develop innovative and flexible approaches to education while ensuring that high quality standards are maintained nationally. The Early Intervention Programme has provided additional funding of £60 million to develop literacy and numeracy skills in the early stages of primary school. Other strands of our Excellence Fund for Schools have also delivered benefits for the development of literacy and numeracy skills.

We are continuing this work with the publication of national statements on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy in schools. The national statements provide for the first time a complete overview of the national guidance, resources and initiatives available across pre-school, primary and secondary education. They also describe the future work we will be undertaking.

The overall aim is to stimulate continuing improvement in attainment by developing greater partnership between and support involving the Scottish Executive, HMIE, education authorities, teachers, parents and other stakeholders. The emphasis will be on greater co-ordination and development of existing work rather than the creation of an additional workload for the staff involved.

The main issues we are seeking to address are:

- the raising of levels of attainment amongst pupils experiencing poverty and injustice;
- the promotion of links between pre-school, primary and secondary schools;
- the improvement of standards in S1/S2 in particular;

- the disparity in attainment in literacy between boys and girls;

- the encouragement of education authorities to share good practice.

In addition, the national statements will seek to ensure that the gains in attainment achieved through the Early Intervention Programme are sustained after the P1/P2 stages.

The national statements will seek to address these issues through three key mechanisms: **Closing the Gap** – by promoting equality, inclusion and diversity and reducing structural inequalities of both opportunities and outcomes; **Building capacity** – by ensuring that the workforce has the capacity to deliver high quality services; and **Ensuring excellence** – by setting clear standards, and evaluating and reporting on quality of outcomes.

There are two significant new elements of the national statements worth specific mention. The first is the appointment of two Development Officers to support education authorities and schools in making the most effective use of the statements and working with them to improve education in literacy and numeracy. The second is the Home Reading Initiative which will focus on parents and carers of children aged 0-8. The initiative will aim to encourage and assist parents and carers to become more involved in reading with their children.

This commentary document provides an overview of the contents of the national statements and is intended for Directors of Education, primary and secondary teachers, members of School Boards and other interested parties.

Education lasts a lifetime. That is why it is so important. By improving our children's literacy and numeracy skills we can enhance their future career prospects, their opportunities to participate in the community and their own personal lives. Indeed, schools are at the very heart of preparing young people to play a full and satisfying part in a modern multi-cultural and inclusive society. Improving literacy and numeracy skills and working towards raising attainment levels will help create more inclusive communities with equal opportunities for all children and young people. I am convinced that, by making greater efforts to harness the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm of everyone involved in education, we can ensure that our children have the chance to gain more from education and from life.

Cathy Jamieson

CATHY JAMIESON, MSP
Minister for Education and Young People

KEY ISSUES AND FUTURE ACTION

1 The national statements describe the wide range of national guidance, resources and initiatives supporting the improvement of literacy and numeracy skills in schools. However, to ensure that all children and young people can achieve high standards, we need to build on the good practice already in evidence. The main areas of concern and action being taken to address them are as follows:

Raising levels of attainment amongst pupils experiencing poverty and injustice

- the Excellence Fund for Schools has provided funding for initiatives such as New Community Schools, study support schemes and help to parents to participate in their children's learning. This funding will continue under the new National Priorities Action Fund;
- the Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative will have an initial focus on parents/carers with children, particularly boys, aged 0-8 living in areas of the country experiencing social injustice;
- Development Officers will provide advice to the Scottish Executive on the development of course materials and other learning and teaching support to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy within the 5-14 curriculum particularly amongst those pupils experiencing social injustice.

Promotion of links between pre-school, primary and secondary schools

- the National Statements aim to increase understanding of the national guidance, resources and initiatives taking place in all three sectors and stimulate greater collaborative working;
- the Assessment Development Programme will seek to develop more effective arrangements for transferring information on pupil progress;
- Development Officers will seek to develop links and collaboration between sectors;
- a SEED-funded initiative will provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations in pre-school, primary and secondary. A separate initiative will develop guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages in primary and secondary school.

KEY ISSUES AND FUTURE ACTION

Improvement of standards in S1/S2

- the Excellence Fund for Schools provided funding to improve standards in S1/S2. This funding will continue under the new National Priorities Action Fund;
- Development Officers will provide advice and guidance to education authorities to promote literacy and numeracy skills in S1/S2.

Addressing the disparity in attainment in literacy between boys and girls

- the Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative will have an initial focus on parents/carers of children, particularly boys, aged 0-8 living in areas of the country experiencing social injustice;
- the Development Officer for literacy will provide advice and guidance to education authorities to improve the performance of boys relative to girls.

Encouraging education authorities to share good practice

- the Scottish Executive will be hosting a seminar for education authorities and school representatives to consider the most effective means of promoting the exchange of information and professional expertise on best practice and teaching and learning support for literacy and numeracy within the 5-14 curriculum resulting from the resources provided by the Excellence Fund and the new National Priorities Action Fund;
- Development Officers will encourage education authorities to share good practice.

2 The appointment of Development Officers for literacy and numeracy and the Home Reading Initiative are fundamental elements of our future approach. Details of these initiatives are as follows:

Development Officers

3 The Development Officers will be appointed for a three-year period to work with education authorities in supporting the national statements on literacy and numeracy. They will provide overarching, focused and subject specific advice on matters such as improving the literacy and numeracy skills of children experiencing social injustice, quality assurance, staff training and development, pre-school/ primary/ secondary liaison, parental involvement and implementation of national advice.

4 The Development Officers will be particularly concerned in working with education authorities to review current provision against the national statements and identifying where and how improvements might be made. Education authorities

would have the option of using this advice in the preparation of their improvement plans linked to the national priorities framework.

5 The Development Officers will focus on the provision of:

- advice to the Scottish Executive on the development of course materials and other learning and teaching support to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy within the 5-14 curriculum particularly amongst those pupils experiencing social injustice;
- advice and guidance to education authorities to promote and develop literacy and numeracy skills in the early years of secondary school;
- recommendations to the Scottish Executive to ensure that Standard Grade courses in English Language and Mathematics provide specific competencies in literacy and numeracy;
- contribute to monitoring good practice in improving progression routes from S1/S2 English Language and Mathematics courses through S3/S4 provision and into S5/S6. This will include schools which have taken advantage of the relaxation of age and stage restrictions for Standard Grade and Higher and the potential use of National Qualification units and courses in S3/S4;
- assistance in the production of a comprehensive resource directory and database of ICT materials relating to the development of literacy and numeracy skills that will be placed on the National Grid for Learning;
- recommendations to the Scottish Executive over the provision of training and other support within the CPD framework to promote the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills;
- the Development Officer for literacy will also provide advice and guidance to education authorities to improve the performance of boys relative to girls in attainment in literacy and assist in implementing the Scottish Executive Home Reading Campaign.

6 In addition to education authorities, the Development Officers will consult with a wide range of interests including HMIE, Learning and Teaching Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Teacher Education Institutions, teacher representatives, parents groups and the Ministerial Strategy Group on Continuing Professional Development to take forward these issues.

KEY ISSUES AND FUTURE ACTION

Home Reading Initiative

7 The Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative will be launched later this year. The initiative will focus in the first instance on parents and carers with children aged 0-8 particularly parents and carers with boys in this age range living in areas of the country experiencing social injustice.

8 Detailed announcements of each of the strands of the campaign will take place throughout this year and beyond.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS

9 The remaining sections of this commentary discuss the reasons for producing the national statements and outline the contents of the documents.

10 The "Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000" required Ministers to make an order setting out national priorities for school education provided in Scotland. The first of the five national priorities that have subsequently been set is "**to raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results**". Local authorities will publish annual statements of local improvement objectives showing how this, and the other national priorities, will be implemented locally and will be required to report each year on their success. Schools will be required to have a School Development Plan – linked to the local authority's statement of objectives – prepared following local consultation and will also report annually on progress against the plan.

11 To assist education authorities and schools with this work, the Scottish Executive has produced national statements on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy in schools. The national statements provide an overview of the current position and raise awareness of the areas for future action. In doing so, they draw on and set out the various elements already in the system. These are:

- national advice given as a result of the findings and recommendations in official reports, surveys, research and initiatives undertaken in relation to literacy and numeracy;

- the key elements of a national strategy for literacy and numeracy introduced in the publication "Targeting Excellence – Modernising Scotland's Schools" (The Scottish Office, 1999). These include the Excellence Fund for Schools and the Ministerial Strategy Committee on Continuing Professional Development for teachers.

12 To set this discussion in context and help to ensure continuity and progression in education, the national statements also contain sections on pre-school education and post-school initiatives to promote literacy and numeracy skills.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS

Pre-School Education

Present Position

13 Pre-school education has undergone a substantial expansion in the recent past. All 4 year olds now have access to a free part-time pre-school education place as well as 80% of all 3 year olds whose parents wish one. **The Scottish Executive is on target to deliver its commitment in "Working Together for Scotland: A Programme for Government" (Scottish Executive, 2001) that all 3 and 4 year olds, whose parents want one, will have access to a free part-time place by 2002.**

14 Pre-school education develops children's skills in enquiry and independent thinking and encourages their self-esteem and confidence, essential for future stages of education. Advice on the curriculum framework for pre-school education contained in the publication "A Curriculum Famework for Children 3-5" (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, 1999) emphasises the important role of pre-school education in children's acquisition and development of literacy and numeracy skills.

Future Work

15 The Development Officers appointed to take forward the national statements on literacy and numeracy (see paragraphs 3-6) will include pre-school education within their remit. They will concentrate in particular on the promotion of greater links and collaboration between pre-school and school education.

16 The Assessment Development Programme is designed to ensure more effective assessment arrangements including better sharing of information on pupil progress between pre-school, primary and secondary sectors (see paragraph 20).

17 With specific reference to improving literacy skills a SEED initiative to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations will cover pre-school education (see paragraph 29). It is planned to distribute the materials during 2002. The Scottish Executive will also be launching a Home Reading Initiative which will include children in pre-school education (see paragraphs 7-8).

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS

5-14 Curriculum

Present Position

Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

18 The 5-14 Curriculum covers children from the first year of primary education to the second year of secondary education. Attainment levels range from Level A (should be attainable in the course of P1-P3 by almost all pupils) to Level F (should be attainable in part by some pupils, and completed by a few pupils, in the course of P7-S2). **The Scottish Executive has set a social justice milestone of "increasing the proportion of our children who attain the appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Primary 2 and Primary 7"** ("Social Justice ... A Scotland Where Everyone Matters, Scottish Executive, 1999").

19 National Tests in reading, writing and mathematics within the 5-14 curriculum were introduced in 1993. The tests are intended to assist teachers in assessing how pupils are progressing in these subjects. It is a fundamental principle of the 5-14 curriculum that the national tests should not be about passing or failing but confirming pupils' progress. The test results are also used in reporting on pupils' performance to parents. Aggregated results are used by schools as part of the information provided to SEED in the National Survey of 5-14 Attainment Levels. Since 1990 the national Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) has surveyed the attainment of a sample of Scottish pupils in different aspects of mathematics in more detail, every three years, and has reported on progression from stage to stage and changes in attainment over time. Figures from both the National Survey and the AAP survey indicate that, although attainment in schools has risen in recent years, significant numbers of children -particularly in secondary school - are not reaching the appropriate level of attainment.

20 The Assessment Development Programme aims to provide a single, coherent national system of assessment, record-keeping and reporting building on current good practice. Work currently being undertaken within the Programme includes the development of a single, straightforward system of record-keeping, based on the Personal Learning Plan that is currently being piloted in New Community Schools. The programme will also create a single web-based bank of "new generation" quality assured assessments to replace National Tests, derived from the current tests and AAP assessments, that can be used by teachers to confirm their judgements.

Excellence Fund for Schools

21 The Scottish Executive's Excellence Fund for Schools has assisted education authorities and schools to improve standards in literacy and numeracy. One of the strands of the Excellence Fund has been the Early Intervention Programme (EIP).

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS

EIP provided education authorities and schools with £56 million over the period 1997/98 – 2001/02 to raise standards of literacy and numeracy in the early stages of primary school. Education authorities contributed another £4 million to the initiative. Education authorities were invited to submit proposals for the implementation of EIP in their area taking account of local circumstances and building on any work already being undertaken. Activities funded by the programme included the recruitment of teachers and other additional school staff, purchase of new books, equipment and other materials and the development of home to school links to enable parents to help their children cultivate literacy and numeracy skills.

22 The Scottish Executive commissioned an evaluation of EIP from a combined team of researchers from Moray House Institute of Education and KPMG Chartered Accountants. The evaluators' final report published in June 2001 concluded that EIP has had an enormous impact on many schools in Scotland. The findings of the research study suggested that overall attainment has risen, particularly in literacy, reflecting that many local authorities had focused on improving literacy rather than numeracy skills in the first phase of EIP between 1998 and 2000. On average, the gap between the socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged remains. However, the evidence is that the increase in reading attainment was greater for the most disadvantaged pupils in those local authorities where a policy was adopted of focusing the available resources on fewer of their schools. Attainment in mathematics was significantly higher in 2000, compared with 1998, in those schools where home-link support had been introduced.

23 In addition to EIP, the Excellence Fund for Schools also provided £12 million over the three years from 1999/00 to 2001/02 to support in-service training and development of teachers to implement the 5-14 curriculum in schools: particularly in relation to literacy, numeracy, science and technology. Specific initiatives to develop literacy skills undertaken by education authorities included provision of support for teachers in assessing writing to develop greater consistency in the use of National Test writing criteria, ensuring a comprehensive writing curriculum between primary and secondary schools and developing intensive reading programmes for S1 pupils. Initiatives undertaken in relation to numeracy includes the development of programmes of study in mental calculations from Levels A-F, sharing of good practice in mathematics teaching between primary and secondary teachers and production of training material on direct interactive teaching of mathematics. Education authorities also used funds provided by the Excellence Fund to encourage the development of greater links and collaborative working between primary and secondary schools.

24 Although other initiatives supported by the Excellence Fund did not have the improvement of literacy and numeracy skills as their main focus of activity, they have had a beneficial influence on this area of education through such factors as reducing

class sizes, providing classroom assistants, developing the National Grid for Learning and supporting initiatives to address truancy and exclusion. In addition, New Community Schools, with the support of the Excellence Fund, aim to help children overcome barriers to learning and stimulate positive development. New Community Schools focus on the provision of integrated services – family support, family learning and health improvement – which address the needs of vulnerable children and their families through quick and focused intervention. Assistance from the Excellence Fund was also provided for study support schemes and initiatives to assist parents to participate in their children's learning.

25 As the Excellence Fund for Schools completed its three-year programme at the end of March 2002 the Scottish Executive required to conduct a review of the Fund. As part of that review, and to continue supporting the Government's key commitment to raising standards in schools, it was decided that this would be replaced by the new National Priorities Action Fund. Under the new Fund education authorities will continue to receive funding similar to that allocated in 2001/02 with £13 million being allocated to Local Authorities to use, if they wish to do so, for promoting early literacy and numeracy and £4 million to support implementation of the 5-14 curriculum.

Future Work

Development Officers

26 Development Officers will be appointed for a three-year period to work with education authorities in supporting the national statements on literacy and numeracy. Details of work the Development Officers will be undertaking are described in paragraphs 3-6.

National Priorities Improvement Framework

27 As noted in the Foreword to this document, the first national priority for school education is to **"raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results"**. To assist in achieving this objective, schools are to be asked to set their own targets for 2005 for 5-14 attainment levels for the combined P3, P4, P6, P7 rolls and for S2 pupils. Education authorities will challenge and support schools to set realistic but stretching targets. The Scottish Executive will provide schools and education authorities with benchmarking data to help them establish local targets. The emphasis will be on securing improvement. The Scottish Executive will also offer guidance and support on possible strategies for raising standards through the National Priorities Support Team, based at Learning and Teaching Scotland. And through an interactive website (http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk).

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS

Excellence Fund for Schools/National Priorities Action Fund

28 The Scottish Executive will host a seminar for education authorities and school representatives to consider the most effective means of promoting the exchange of information and professional expertise on best practice and learning and teaching support for literacy and numeracy within the 5-14 curriculum resulting from resources provided by the Excellence Fund and new National Priorities Action Fund. Developing greater collaborative working between the different educational sectors will be one of the main issues for discussion.

Staff Development

29 SEED has undertaken an initiative to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations within the 3-14 curriculum, Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses. The principles and framework take account of curriculum and assessment guidance and support for pre-school, 5-14 and 14-18; the latest research and experience gained to date in Scotland from transition records, AAP, 5-14 National Tests in Reading, Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses as well as considering current practice in other English-speaking countries. It is planned to distribute the resulting materials to schools during 2002.

30 A separate SEED initiative will develop guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages in primary and secondary school. The materials will be designed for teachers to raise pupils' knowledge and awareness of the nature, function and variety of language structures. Initial guidance and support materials were issued in September 2001 with an associated CD-ROM distributed in December 2001.

31 The Scottish Executive is working to develop and implement a national strategy and framework for teachers' continuing professional development. Further details of this work are contained in paragraphs 49-52.

Standard Grade

Present Position

32 The Scottish Executive has set the following social justice milestones in relation to Standard Grade:

- bringing the poorest-performing 20% of pupils, in terms of Standard Grade achievement, closer to the performance of all pupils;

» ensuring that all young people leaving local authority care will have achieved at least English and Mathematics Standard Grades.

Further details are contained in the report "Social Justice ... A Scotland Where Everyone Matters" (Scottish Executive, 1999).

33 The Scottish Executive has sought to achieve these milestones by providing support to education authorities and schools through the Excellence Fund for Schools. Paragraphs 21-25 described the various strands of the Excellence Fund that have helped to improve literacy and numeracy skills. Initiatives particularly aimed at assisting the poorest-performing pupils and those experiencing social injustice include the development of New Community Schools, provision of study support, projects to assist parents to participate in their children's learning and projects aimed at addressing truancy and exclusion. This funding is continuing under the new National Priorities Action Fund.

Future Work

34 For 1999 to 2001, an average of 93.9% of S4 pupils nationally achieved an award at least at Foundation level in Standard Grade (or equivalent) English Language. 93.8% of S4 pupils nationally achieved an award at least at Foundation level in Standard Grade (or equivalent) Mathematics over the same period (these figures cover publicly-funded schools).

35 The achievement of this level of awards is extremely encouraging. However, it should be noted that success in Standard Grade English Language and Mathematics courses - particularly at Foundation/General level - does not guarantee specific competencies in literacy and numeracy skills. The Development Officers appointed to take forward the national statements for literacy and numeracy will consider this issue in conjunction with key stakeholders and make recommendations to the Scottish Executive.

36 To assist in securing further improvement at Standard Grade, secondary schools will set their own targets for 2005 in relation to the % of the original S4 cohort who, by the end of S6, have attained Standard Grades at level 3 or better in English and Mathematics. Education authorities will challenge and support schools to set realistic but stretching targets for Standard Grades. The Scottish Executive will provide schools and education authorities with benchmarking data to help them establish local targets. The Scottish Executive will also offer guidance and support on possible strategies for raising standards through the National Priorities Support Team, based at Learning and Teaching Scotland. And through an interactive website (http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk).

37 In relation to the development of literacy skills, the SEED initiatives to develop a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in tests and examinations and the preparation of guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages referred to in paragraphs 29 and 30 will be designed for use with Standard Grade courses.

National Qualifications

Present Position

38 In the post-compulsory school stages of S5/S6, most pupils will be pursuing courses of a more specialised nature related to personal interest, future employment or entry to further or higher education. However, guidance to education authorities and schools emphasises that opportunities will exist for pupils to have their attainment in specified core skills, including literacy and numeracy, recognised through the national certification process. It is advised that schools take account of pupils' previous attainment in these skills and ensure that individual programmes of study enable pupils to continue the development of core skills to the highest appropriate level, keeping in mind their value in the process of lifelong learning and as entry qualifications for future courses or careers.

Future Work

39 In relation to the development of literacy skills, the SEED initiatives to develop a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in tests and examinations and the preparation of guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages referred to in paragraphs 29 and 30 will be designed for use with National Qualifications courses.

40 The following resources for National Qualifications courses are also being developed on the National Grid for Learning:

- Mathematics National Qualifications CD-ROMS, "SCETNET Higher Still", which will be sent to all secondary schools in September 2002;

- distance learning resources for numeracy core skills at Intermediate 2 and Higher are currently being piloted. The materials are expected to be available towards the end of this year.

Policy on the Use of Calculators in Teaching and Learning of Numeracy in School Education

41 National advice notes that, in recognition of the widespread use of calculators in everyday life, pupils should learn how to use calculators appropriately. However, pupils should not use calculators to provide unnecessary support or substitute for the development of personal proficiency in basic arithmetical calculations. To assist the development of mental calculation skills, papers focusing specifically on mental calculations and a non-calculator paper have been included in national tests in the 5-14 curriculum. New non-calculator papers have also been introduced into Standard Grade and National Qualifications examinations.

42 In relation to the use of advanced calculators as a teaching tool in mathematics education, the report "Advanced Calculators in Mathematics Education" (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, 2000) made several proposals on the appropriate use of graphics calculators in mathematics courses in secondary school. The proposals were endorsed by Ministers leading to the development of a national strategy for staff development of mathematics teachers in the use of graphic calculators.

Financial Education

Present Position

43 Financial education is a cross-curricular area that aims to teach pupils how best to manage personal finances in the midst of a changing context of wider economic forces affecting people's lives, society and the environment as a whole. Opportunities for promoting financial education exist in different subject areas across the primary and secondary curriculum including Personal and Social Development/ Personal and Social Education, English and Modern Languages. A range of learning and teaching support material has been produced to promote and develop financial education in schools. These include "Financial Education in Scottish Schools: A Statement of Position" and the associated "Guide for Teachers and Managers" and "Directory of Resources" (all SCCC, 1999).

Future Work

44 The Deputy Minister for Education and Young People launched the Scottish Centre for Financial Education in January 2002. The Centre is a partnership between the Scottish Executive, Learning and Teaching Scotland and the Royal Bank of Scotland. The Centre will help promote and develop financial education in both primary and secondary schools and across a range of curriculum areas. The Centre will offer advice and support to education authorities and schools on such issues as how to

integrate the learning outcomes of financial education within the school curriculum and the provision of professional development activities for staff involved in teaching financial education.

45 One of the first tasks undertaken by the Centre was the distribution of a CD-ROM, "Facing Up to Finance", to all secondary schools in Scotland. The CD-ROM is intended for use by S3 and S4 pupils as part of their lessons in Personal and Social Education but can also be a useful resource for other subjects including Mathematics and English Language. It includes pupil activities on such topics as explaining the information on a pay slip, choosing a holiday, running a business and preparing for independent living. Details of the Centre's other activities will be announced in due course.

National Grid for Learning

Present Position

46 The National Grid for Learning (http://www.ngflscotland.gov.uk) programme is designed to ensure that the educational benefits of modern information and communications technology (ICT) are available to all sectors of education.

47 A range of learning and teaching support material in relation to literacy and numeracy is already available or being currently developed on the NGfL. These include:

- on-line version of "Story Book Website" which supports literacy and numeracy for the early years through the use of online games;
- an on-line resource for primary schools on life in Viking times, "Sagas and Sums", which focus on developing numeracy and literacy skills;
- the Scottish Virtual Teachers Centre holds a number of ICT resources focusing on literacy and numeracy and is linked to other websites. Resources include "Thinking Together", "Wordmaster", a link to the Association for Scottish Literacy Studies and using ICT in teaching mathematics at Standard Grade and National Qualifications level;
- part-funding for the BBC Scotland "Standard Grade Support", an on-line revision resource created by BBC Education, which includes revision materials and an on-line teachers' facility for Standard Grade English Language and Mathematics;

- "Lifeskills Banking" CD-ROM for the special educational needs sector and distributed to all Scottish secondary schools and colleges. This resource consists of training materials which help to teach pupils how to fill in forms, use auto teller machines, plan holidays, deal with currency conversion, etc.

Future Work

48 Development Officers will discuss with local authorities, Learning and Teaching Scotland and business organisations the production of a comprehensive resource directory and database of ICT materials relating to the development of literacy and numeracy skills to be placed on the NGfL.

Continuing Professional Development of Teachers

Present Position

49 The recent teachers' agreement, "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century", introduced the requirement that teachers undertake an additional contractual 35 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) per annum. In addition to the general mandatory CPD, a professional development programme will be developed for those teachers wishing to pursue the new qualification-based Chartered Teacher route.

50 A Ministerial Strategy Committee has been established to oversee the development and implementation of a national strategy and framework for teachers' CPD and is charged with ensuring that the strategy reflects the national priorities for school education. Any framework will, however, be driven by teachers' individual needs and school, local and national priorities. It will provide a basis for developing teachers' skills in generic as well as subject specific areas and will address the issue of improving standards of literacy and numeracy as appropriate. The framework will ensure that teachers are kept continuously up to date and can respond to key developments in their subject(s) and the curriculum as a whole.

51 The framework for Chartered Teacher status is being developed by a consortium led by Arthur Andersen in partnership with the Universities of Edinburgh and Strathclyde. The Ministerial Strategy Committee will monitor the work of the consortium. Development of a CPD framework is currently in the early stages and will be dependent on consultation with all main stakeholders.

Future Work

52 The Development Officers taking forward the national statements will consult with the Ministerial Strategy Group, Teacher Education Institutions, education authorities and other stakeholders the provision of training and other support within the CPD framework to promote the learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS

Initial Teacher Education

Present Position

53 New guidelines for courses of initial teacher education (ITE) were published in 1998 and came into effect in August 1999. The guidelines set out Scottish Ministers' policy on the content, nature and duration of courses leading to a teaching qualification for the primary and secondary sectors. The guidelines have been widely welcomed by the education community. Within the guidelines, the list of competencies which newly-qualified teachers are expected to have acquired includes the requirement that the teacher must be able (whether at pre-school, primary or secondary level) to play his or her full part in developing pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy.

54 Specifically, for courses leading to the primary teaching qualification, the guidelines state that new teachers must be able to teach English Language and Mathematics at all levels, ranging from the introduction of early literacy and numeracy skills to level F within the 5-14 Curriculum. For courses leading to a teaching qualification in a secondary subject, the guidelines state that the course must prepare the student to be able to identify and meet pupils' needs in the language and mathematical aspects of their subject(s).

55 The Scottish Executive has now developed benchmark standards for ITE, incorporating the competencies from the guidelines and also benchmark information on academic standards. The "Standard for Initial Teacher Education in Scotland" was published in February 2001 and is a key reference for the collaborative review of ITE, the purpose of which is to maintain and improve the standard of ITE. HMIE has also recently published a report, "Preparing for Literacy", focusing on the preparation of student teachers to teach reading and writing from pre-school to S2.

Future Work

56 A pilot of collaborative review is taking place in academic session 2001/02. The main round of collaborative review covering all Higher Education Institutions providing ITE will take place in a four-year cycle from 2002/06.

Post-School Initiatives

Present Position

57 The Scottish Executive publication "How Can Parents Help Their Children's Learning?" provides a range of general advice and examples of good practice to assist parents, carers, teachers and pupils to work together to help pupils become better learners. Some parents and carers may, however, be insecure in their own literacy and numeracy skills. It is important that parents and carers in this position do not feel isolated, helpless or embarrassed but can acquire the knowledge and confidence to access support to develop their skills.

58 It may, therefore, be useful in this context to consider the broader issue of adult literacy and numeracy. Results derived from the 1997 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) imply that 800,000 adults in Scotland, of which 520,000 are employed, have low literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, specific life changes such as a new job or promotion, leaving care for a more independent lifestyle, parenthood or retirement may make new demands on literacy skills. The pace of societal change, organisation change, or the growing momentum in technological advances, can also increase pressure on skills that have been acquired some time in the past. The resulting impact on adults is a diminished quality of life, where promotion and career progression, participation in democracy and community life, health, housing and personal relationships are all adversely affected.

59 In June 2000, the Adult Literacy Team was established to provide a focus for the development of national policy and strategy on adult literacy and numeracy. The Team's report, "Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland", was published by the Scottish Executive in July 2001. Recommendations within the report have been based upon the findings from wide-ranging research including household, employer and workforce surveys.

60 The recommendations include:

- national leadership and effective local action with a national strategy overseen by Ministers and co-ordinated within the Scottish Executive; Communities Scotland acting as a development centre to support adult literacy and numeracy initiatives and a lead role for Community Learning Strategies (see EID Circular 4/99 "Community Education" for details of Community Learning Strategies);

- a quality learning experience with a major effort to engage a broad range of people in workplaces and communities and development of provision that is relevant to learners' lives; a commitment to individual learning plans and

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specialised guidance and assessment; a new adult literacy and numeracy curriculum framework; recognition and accreditation of progress through the development of Progress File and the core skills framework; strong emphasis on the role of ICT;

- development of the system of delivering support with the quality of provision reviewed against the best practice guidance contained within "Literacies in the Community: Good Practice Framework" (Scottish Executive/City of Edinburgh Council Education Department, 2000); a national training programme to raise expertise amongst literacy and numeracy practitioners; continuous research and development of the strategy and establishment of a Research Advisory Group;

- promoting awareness through pathfinder projects to test new ways of delivering the strategy and developing the skills of learners.

Future Work

61 Funding of £22.5 million will be provided over the three years from 2001/02 to take forward the Team's recommendations and meet the national target set out in the report of helping 80,000 adults over this period. Community Learning and Development is one way of improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. £18.5 million of this amount is therefore being distributed through local authorities to Community Learning Strategy Partnerships to help 33,000 new adult learners and provide a wide range of new and improved learning opportunities in a variety of settings. The development of family literacy is an excellent example of effective lifelong learning. Parents and carers learn how to help their children develop their skills, while improving their own abilities. Lifelong learning initiatives such as this are vital to grounding literacy and numeracy programmes in the daily lives of adults and communities.

CONCLUSION

62 The Development Officers appointed to take forward work on the national statements for improving attainment in literacy and numeracy in schools will be in contact with education authorities and other agencies. However, if there are any specific issues within the Development Officers' remit that readers of this document believe should be addressed during the course of their work then comments should be addressed in writing to:

Development Officers – National Statements on Improving Literacy and Numeracy in Schools
Qualifications, Assessment and Curriculum Division
Area 2A
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

63 Electronic copies of the national statements will be placed on the Scottish Virtual Teachers' Centre within the National Grid for Learning (http://www.ngflscotland.gov.uk) and updated and expanded as necessary. There will also be a facility for teachers and other interested parties to post their own comments and suggestions on the contents of the national statement and provide information on initiatives to promote literacy and numeracy skills taking place within their own school or education authority that they would wish to publicise more widely.

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